

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KUWAIT 05996 291038Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01
/057 W

-----291133Z 018980 /21

R 290916Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6936
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 5996

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, KU
SUBJECT: LEADERSHIP OF KUWAITI POLITICAL "CLUB" REMOVED
AND REPLACED

REF: (A) KUWAIT 5056, (B) KUWAIT 5198, (C) KUWAIT 5347.

1. KUWAITI PRESS HAS PUBLISHED AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY MINISTRY
OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND LABOR, DATED DEC. 21, TO EFFECT
THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE ISTIQLAL CLUB, THE MOST
ACTIVE ALL-KUWAITI REFORMIST/LEFTIST POLITICAL CLUB IN
KUWAIT, HAS BEEN REMOVED AND REPLACED BY MINISTERIAL
ORDER. THE BASIS FOR THE MINISTER'S MOVE WAS REPORTED
TO BE THE OUTGOING BOARD'S VIOLATION OF THE 1962 KUWAITI
LAW (STATUTE 24/62) GOVERNING PROFESSIONAL GROUPS,
CLUBS, ETC., THE STATED BASIS FOR THE EARLIER DISSOLUTION
OF THE LEADERSHIPS OF THE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (REF A),
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KUWAIT 05996 291038Z

ASSOCIATION OF WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS (REF B), AND BAR
ASSOCIATION (REF C). AS IN THESE EARLIER CASES, THE
SPECIFIC VIOLATION WAS ALLEGED TO BE THE ISTIQLAL CLUB'S
PARTICIPATION IN PUBLISHING A "STATEMENT ON SEPTEMBER 18
INVOLVING POLITICAL MATTERS".

2. COMMENT: AS IN THE EARLIER CASES CITED, THE MINISTER'S ACTION FOLLOWS CURRENT GOK POLICY AND THE ESTABLISHED PATTERN OF ACTION AGAINST ALLEGEDLY DISSIDENT LEADERSHIPS OF A NUMBER OF ALL-KUWAITI CIVIC GROUPS. THIS PATTERN WAS FIRST ESTABLISHED WHEN THE GOK MOVED AGAINST THE LEADERSHIP OF THE KUWAIT WORKERS CONFEDERATION (AFTER IT HAD ALLEGEDLY SPONSORED THE SEPTEMBER 18 PUBLIC STATEMENT CRITICIZING THE GOK).

3. WE HAVE AN INDICATION THAT THE DISSOLUTION OF CIVIC LEADERSHIP GROUPS MAY NOT HAVE RUN ITS COURSE, EVEN WITH THE DOWNFALL OF THE ISTIQLAL CLUB BOARD. A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF THE KUWAIT GRADUATE SOCIETY TOLD THE PAO IN NOVEMBER THAT THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THIS BOARD ALSO WOULD BE REPLACED, EVEN THOUGH THE BOARD MEMBER WHO SIGNED THE FAMOUS SEPTEMBER 18 PUBLICATION ACTED WITHOUT AUTHORITY. (THIS SAME SOURCE ACCURATELY PREDICTED THE DEMISE OF THE ISTIQLAL CLUB BOARD.)

4. THESE GOK ACTIONS SHOULD BE VIEWED IN A BROADER PERSPECTIVE. THE GROUPS WHICH ARE ALLEGED TO HAVE JOINED TOGETHER TO ISSUE THE SEPTEMBER 18 PAMPHLET HAVE ALL LOST THEIR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS (EXCEPT THE GRADUATE AND STUDENT GROUPS) AND ALL HAVE DONE SO WITHOUT CREATING A NOTICEABLE RIPPLE IN KUWAITI SOCIETY. THIS PUBLIC PASSIVITY RESEMBLES THE GENERAL ACQUIESCENCE WHICH MET THE AMIR'S SURPRISE EXTENSION OF EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY AND WITHDRAWL OF LEGISLATIVE PRIVILEGE LAST AUGUST. FOUR MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE AMIR DISSOLVED THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, SUSPENDED CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONAL PRO-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KUWAIT 05996 291038Z

VISIONS, AND TIGHTENED CONTROLS ON PRESS FREEDOM. DURING THIS PERIOD THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIONS BY THE GOVERNMENT -- PUBLICATIONS CLOSED, LABOR LEADERS ARRESTED, AND CIVIC GROUPS INTEREFED WITH. IN THE WAKE OF THESE UNUSUAL EVENTS, SOME HAVE WONDERED, FIRST, WHETHER THESE "AFTERSHOCKS" HAVE ERODED GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE RULERS OF KUWAIT AND, SECOND, WHETHER THE RULERS WILL EASE OFF NOW THAT THE DISTURBING LEBANESE SITUATION HAS CALMED. WE MUST CONCLUDE, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE THERE IS NO CLEAR TREND YET OF A RELAXATION ON THE PART OF THE CAUTIOUS, SECURITY-MINDED RULERS, NEITHER ARE THERE CLEAR SIGNS OF EROSION OF THEIR PRESTIGE OR CENTRAL LEADERSHIP POSITION
AS A RESULT OF THE FIRM HAND THEY HAVE EXERCISED. WHILE A SMALL MINORITY OF KUWAITIS AND OTHER RESIDENTS OF KUWAIT MAY QUESTION WHETHER THE RULING HAND IS TOO FIRM, THE LARGE MAJORITY SEEM EITHER BASICALLY DISINTERESTED

IN POLITICS AND INTERNAL SECURITY, AND CONCENTRATING
ON "BUSINESS AS USUAL", OR QUITE WILLING TO SEE
THE SABAH FAMLly AND ITS CLOSEST ALLIES RETAIN FOR
SOME TIME THE EXTRAORDINARY POWERS THEY ASSUMED ON
AUGUST 29.
MAESTRONE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY DISSENSION, PARTY LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976KUWAIT05996
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760474-1117
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976127/aaaaafwp.tel
Line Count: 121
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 KUWAIT 5056, 77 KUWAIT 5198, 77 KUWAIT 5347
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEADERSHIP OF KUWAITI POLITICAL "CLUB" REMOVED AND REPLACED
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, KU, KUWAITI TEACHERS ASSOC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006